

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

By the present amendment, the specification has been amended to eliminate a typing error in one of the headings. Claims 12 and 22, have been amended to yet more clearly define the present invention. Claim 14 has been amended to correct a formal error therein.

Claims 1-11 are canceled. Claims 12-22 are pending.

Based on the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, the application is deemed to be in condition for allowance and action to that end is respectfully requested.

I. OBJECTION TO THE CLAIMS

The Examiner objects to claim 14 for a formal error therein. As noted above, claim 14 has been amended to eliminate the formal error therein pointed out by the Examiner.

II. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejects claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite, pointing out a possible contradiction between the limitations “between the teeming ladle (2) and the continuous casting mold (4)”

and “in the continuous casting mold (4)” in describing the “intermediate receptacle (3)”.

It is respectfully submitted that no contradiction exists. Specifically claim 22 recites that signal transmitters (1) [are] provided in an intermediate receptacle (3) that is located between a teeming ladle (2) and the continuous casting mold (4), in the continuous casting mold 4 ..., i.e., the signal transmitters are provided in both the receptacle and the casting mold, with the receptacle being located between the teeming ladle and the mold.

In view of the above clarification, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

II. Rejection Over the Prior Art

The Examiner rejects claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Streubel et al., WO 02/090 019 (with the corresponding U.S. Patent No. 7,025,118 used as a translation).

It is respectfully submitted that claims 12-22 are patentable over Streubel et al., claims 1-11 having been canceled.

Specifically, claim 12 recites a method comprising the steps of indirectly measuring a movable amount of a core liquid volume by direct measurement of

generated process parameters on fixed or adjustable individual support rollers (6a) or groups (7) of fixed or adjustable support roller pairs (7a) with signal transmitters (10) which generate respective force and/or path signals which represent continuously changeable temporary positions of the solidification point in the cast strand during casting along an entire solidification stretch of the cast strand; producing a calculation model for each momentary position of the solidification point based on the force and/or path signals; and continuously adjusting changeable casting parameters based on respective calculated positions of the solidification point.

It is respectfully submitted that Streubel et al. does not disclose or even suggest the foregoing novel features of the present invention.

Streubel et al. is based on a completely different principle, namely, on maintaining the position of the sump melt-cavity tip (solidification point) approximately constant in the SR (soft-reduction) stretch (col. 2, lines 42-50, the '118 patent). This is achieved in Streubel et al. by controllably reducing the strand thickness between the mold and the SR stretch by adjusting rollers of a respective roller pair (claim 1, (c), the '118 patent). This ensures that the solidification point in Streubel remains approximately constant in the SR stretch.

It is respectfully submitted that Streubel does not disclose “continuously changeable momentary positions of the solidification point in the cast strand during casting along an entire solidification stretch, as recited in claim 12.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that Streubel et al. does not anticipate or makes obvious the present invention as defined by claim 12, and claim 12 is patentable over Streubel et al. and is allowable.

Claims 13-21 depend on claim 12 and are allowable by the same reason claim 12 is allowable and further because of specific features recited therein which, when taken alone and/or in combination with those of claim 12, are not disclosed or suggested in the prior art.

Claim 22 recites an apparatus for affecting the method of claims 12-21 and is allowable for the same reasons claim 12 is allowable.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place the case in condition for final allowance, it is respectfully requested that

such amendment or correction be carried out by Examiner's Amendment and the case passed to issue. Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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